

Message Text

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SUBJ: MILGOV FORMS NEW TEACHERS FEDERATION AND RELEASES
SOME IMPRISONED TEACHER LEADERS

SUMMARY: SINDICATO DE EDUCADORES DE LA REVOLUCION PERUANA (SERP), AFFILIATED TO CTRP, HELD ITS FORMATIVE CONGRESS MARCH 26, TO 28 AT LIMA. CLAIMS TO REPRESENT 55 PERCENT OF PERU'S MORE THAN 100,000 PUBLIC SCHOOL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS. PRESIDENT VELEASCO RECVIDED SERP LEADERS AND SEVERAL MINISTERS ADDRESSED CONGRESS. MILGOV ALMOST OPENLY FINANCED CONGRESS AND LARGE PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN. SERP REPRESENTS MAJOR POLITICAL EFFORT TO UNDERCUT ANTI-MILGOV LEFT-RADICAL CONTROLLED SUTEP, WHICH GENERALLY BELIEVED STILL HAVE SUPPORT OF MOST PERU'S TEACHERS. MILGOV ALLOWED SERP TO ANNOUNCE AS ITS FIRST CONCRETE ACHEIVEMENT THE PROVISIONAL RELEASE OF ABOUT HALF THE 81 SUTEP LEADERS STILL IMPRISONED WITHOUT TRIAL SINCE LAST OCTOBER'S TEACHERS' STRIKE. FIRST TEST OF NEW UNION'S SUPPORT SHOULD COME IN POSSIBLE MAY STRIKE BY SUTEP OR IN JUNE TEACHERS' CO-OP ELECTIONS.

1. FOLLOWING SEVERAL REGIONAL MEETINGS, PRO-MILGOV UNION OF EDUCATORS OF THE PERUVIAN REVOLUTION (SERP) GATHERED A CLAIMED 1,800 TEACHERS AT CALLAO MARCH 26 TO 28 FOR A FORM-
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TIVE CONGRESS. POLICY STATEMENTS OF CONGRESS EXPECTEDLY

EMPHASIZED SUPPORT OF MILGOV AND ITS PROGRAM OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM, WITH SALARY AND WORKING CONDITIONS DEMANDS VAGUELY FORMULATED AND IN SECONDARY PLANE. LEADERS CLAIMED AFFILIATION OF 55 PERCENT OF PERU'S MORE THAN 100,000 TEACHERS, EACH OF WHOM WOULD SUPPOSEDLY PAY 50 SOLES (ABOUT \$1.14) MONTHLY DUES.

2. SINCE PERUVIAN LAW PROHIBITS OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF SINGLE UNION EMBRACING ALL LEVELS OF TEACHERS, FOUR SECRETARIES GENERAL REPRESENTING CONSTITUENT PRIMARY, SECONDARY, TECHNICAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION UNION BODIES WERE ELECTED. HECTOR ZEVALLO SAAVEDRA, SEC-GEN OF SECONDARY TEACHERS' BODY, SEEMS TO BE DE FACTO SEC-GEN OF SERP AND PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN. MOST OFFICERS ARE UNKNOWN TO US. ONE TRADE UNION OBSERVER BELIEVES MOST ARE PRO-MILGOV TEACHERS WITHOUT CURRENT PARTISAN POLITICAL TIES OR PREVIOUS UNION EXPERIENCE TAPPED FOR THE JOB BY SINAMOS AND MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

3. MINISTERS OF INTERIOR AND LABOR WERE AMONG HIGH MILGOV OFFICIALS ADDRESSING CONGRESS, AND NEW OFFICERS WERE RECEIVED WITH EXPECTED WARMTH IN POST-ELECTION CALL ON PRESIDENT VELASCO. AS ONE OF ITS FIRST ACTS, SERP AFFILIATED TO MILGOV-BACKED CTRP.

4. DURING VISIT BY SERP OFFICERS, PRESIDENT VELASCO SAID PROCESSING OF CHARGES (FOR ILLEGAL OBTENTION OF ARMS, ORGANIZATION OF ARMED GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES, AND AGAINST PUBLIC ORDER) AGAINST SUTEP TEACHER LEADERS IMPRISONED SINCE LAST OCTOBER'S STRIKE WOULD BE EXPEDITED. AS FOLLOW-UP, MILGOV ALLOWED SERP TO ANNOUNCE PROVISIONAL RELEASE MARCH 30 AND APRIL 2 OF 44 OF THE 81 SUTEP LEADERS STILL DETAINED. MOST OF SUTEP LEADERS HAVE BEEN HELD AT EL SEPA JUNGLE PRISON, WHERE BY LAW ONLY CONVICTED FELONS CAN BE CONFINED.

5. GOVERNMENT FINANCING, ALLEGEDLY THROUGH SINAMOS, OF PER DIEM, TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSES OF CONGRESS, AS WELL AS EXTENSIVE TELEVISION AND RADIO PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN, WAS OBVIOUS. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ALSO ALLEGEDLY PRESSURING TEACHERS TO JOIN. EARLIER, SIMILAR SINAMOS AND EDUCATION MINISTRY CAMPAIGN TO BUILD UP FENTEP, THE MOSCOW-LINE COMMUNIST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DOMINATED TEACHERS UNION, WAS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND SEEMED TO STRENGTHEN SUTEP'S OVERWHELMING MAJORITY IN LAST YEAR'S TEACHERS CO-OP ELECTION. FENTEP STILL EXISTS, AND APPARENTLY HAS NO INTENTION OF MERGING WITH SERP, BUT HAS LITTLE INFLUENCE. THOSE SUTEP LEADERS NOT IMPRISONED HAVE ANNOUNCED A NATIONAL TEACHER'S MARCH FOR APRIL 26, A NATIONAL CONVENTION FOR MAY 11 AND

12, AND A POSSIBLE MAY GENERAL STRIKE. APRISTA AND

OTHER MODERATE ELEMENTS WITHIN SUTEP HAVE MET TO PLAN FOR CONVENTION AND SUBSEQUENT CONGRESS, BUT HAVE TOLD LABATT THEY HAVE LITTLE HOPE OF WRESTING CONTROL FROM LEFT-RADICAL LEADERSHIP. POSSIBLE SUTEP STRIKE AND THE NATIONWIDE TEACHERS' CO-OP ELECTIONS IN JUNE SHOULD PROVIDE A MEASURE OF WHETHER THIS LATEST MILGOV ATTEMPT TO NEUTRALIZE THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION OF PERU'S TEACHERS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.
BELCHER

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